

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-3 and 6-13 are pending.

Claims 1-3, and 7 and 8 stand rejected.

Claims 6 and 11-13 are allowed.

Claims 9 and 10 are objected to.

Claims 2, 3 and 7 have been amended

Claim 1 has been cancelled without prejudice.

No new matter has been added.

Claims 2-3 and 6-13 are hereby submitted for reconsideration.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, and 7-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over De Buyst (EP 1,206,024 A1) in view of Schuyler (U.S. Patent No. 2,901,725 ). Independent claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eckert (U.S. Patent No. 5,630,735) in view of De Buyst. Claim 3 is rejected as being unpatentable over De Buyst in view of Auclair (U.S. Patent No. 6,325,678 B1). Applicants note that the Examiner has allowed independent claims 11 and dependent claims 6 and 12 as well as independent claim 13. Also, the Examiner has indicated that claims 9 and 10 would be allowable if re-written in independent format.

Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's contentions, in order to expedite the prosecution of the present application, Applicants submit the following remarks.

Regarding independent claim 11, Applicants accept the allowance of this claim as well as claims 6 and 12 which depend therefrom.

Regarding independent claim 1, although Applicants disagree with the

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Reply to Office Action dated June 10, 2005

Examiner's rejection, this claim is cancelled without prejudice.

Regarding independent claim 13, Applicants accept the allowance of this claim.  
Dependent claims 2, 3 and 7 were amended to depend from allowable claim 13.  
Dependent claims 8-10 depend in some form to claim 7 and thus all now ultimately  
dependent from allowed independent claim 13.

On a separate note, when reviewing the claims, it was noted that the term  
"covering means" in claim 2 lacked antecedent basis. The term has been amended to  
correctly read "extension means" which does have proper antecedent basis in claim 13  
from which it depends.

As this Amendment After Final Rejection has not changed the claims in any  
substantive manner no RCE is required. Applicants reserve the right to continue  
prosecution of claim 1 in its un-amended form in a timely filed continuation application.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention  
as claimed in claims 2-3 and 6-13 is now in condition for allowance, the earliest possible  
notice of which is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner feels that a telephone interview  
would advance the prosecution of this application he is invited to contact the undersigned  
at the number listed below.

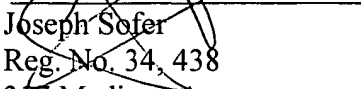
Respectfully submitted

SOFER & HAROUN, LLP

Dated:

8/8/05

By:

  
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